

Archaeological/Historic Preservation

The National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 requires that federally funded or permitted projects:

- take into account the projects effect on historic properties
- be reviewed by the State Historic Preservation Officer.

A historic property is defined as a district, building, structure, object, or site that is listed in or eligible for the *National Register of Historic Places*. The Division of Historic Preservation and Archeology of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources (IDNR) enforces this Act. The State Historic Preservation Officer is the Director of IDNR.

During the environmental document preparation phase, the proposed right-of-way is examined for archeological and historical resources. An archeological records check, an archeological reconnaissance, if necessary, and sometimes archeological excavation are conducted for the project area. Previously undisturbed rights-of-way, both existing and proposed, are usually included in the archaeological reconnaissance. The findings of the archeological work and historical data are included in environmental documents, which are included in the construction document package.

When INDOT undertakes construction projects, INDOT is required to submit the following information to IDNR:

- a letter describing the project (including purpose, funding source, etc.)
- a map delineating the project's boundaries referenced to known landmarks (such as streets and buildings)
- recent photographs of the area (including properties that may be 50 years old or older)
- archaeological reports for the project area
- other information as required by IDNR.

If significant sites are found in the project area, they must be excavated by an archeologist or be avoided by the project. Sites to be avoided will be shown on project plans. Care must be taken to avoid impact to these areas.

During construction, crews should be alert to the discovery of:

- archaeological artifacts (such as bones, stone tools, arrowheads, pottery)
- features (such as shell or charcoal concentrations, foundations)
- human remains.

If artifacts, features or remains are uncovered, state law requires that the work stop in the area where the discovery is made and that the discovery be reported to the Division of Historic Preservation and Archaeology, IDNR, within two business days. **Notify the Division of Operations Support of the finding, the Environmental Assessment Section of INDOT, and then report discoveries to the IDNR at (317) 232-1646, FAX: (317) 232-8036. Do not allow anyone to collect artifacts from the discovery except the appropriate IDNR or INDOT archaeological staff.** If the discovery is of sufficient importance, IDNR may require an archaeological investigation of the area and have the area guarded. If this occurs, contact the Division of Operations Support and the Environmental Assessment Section for guidance.